

Message Text

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UNCLAS PARIS 5941

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ETRN, FR

SUBJECT: PRESS REPORTS ON NEW TCA PARIS AREA

SUMMARY - PILOT AND AIR TRAFFIC CONTROLLER UNIONS ARE DECLINING RESPONSIBILITY FOR NEW AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL PROCEDURES DEVELOPED DURING THE PAST YEARS BY THE FRENCH CIVIL AVIATION AUTHORITIES TO INCLUDE TRAFFIC TO BE GENERATED BY THE NEW CHARLES-DE-GAULLE AIRPORT.

1. PRESS HAS GIVEN PUBLICITY TO CLAIMS BY FRENCH PILOT AND AIR TRAFFIC CONTROLLERS UNIONS (SNPL AND APCA-SNCTA RESPECTIVELY) THAT THE NEW AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL PROCEDURES FOR PARIS (TCA) WERE UNSAFE AND WERE ILL-CONCEIVED PRODUCT OF NON-PROFESSIONALS. THE NEW RULES WENT INTO EFFECT MARCH 5 TO INCORPORATE TRAFFIC WHICH WILL BE GENERATED BEGINNING MARCH 13 BY CHARLES DE GAULLE AIRPORT (CDG). A SPOKESMAN FOR THE AIR TRAFFIC CONTROLLERS'S UNION IS QUOTED AS SAYING "FLYING IN PARIS AREA HAS NOW BECOME MORE DANGEROUS" AND "THE AIR LANES IN THE PARIS AREA ARE COMPLICATED UNDER THE NEW PLAN. PILOTS HAVE TO SWITCH AIR LANES AND RADIOS FREQUENCIES TOO OFTEN, INCREASING THE DANGER OF MID-AIR COLLISION. THE UNIONS CRITIZED THE RADAR AT CDG FOR ALLEGEDLY HAVING HAD SO MANY BLIND SPOTS AS TO BE "LIKE A SWISS CHEESE". THE UNIONS CLAIMED THERE WAS INSUFFICIENT COORDINATION

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AMONG AIR TRAFFIC CONTROLLERS AT THE THREE MAIN AIRPORTS AND

EXCESSIVELY COMPLICATED FLIGHT PROCEDURES WERE REQUIRED, E.G. PLANES LEAVING CDG HAVE TO EXECUTE THREE COMPULSORY ALTITUDE CHANGES ON CLIMB AND THE SLIGHTEST DEVIATION FROM THESE ALTITUDES COULD THREATEN THEIR SAFETY. FOR THESE REASONS THE AIR TRAFFIC CONTROLLERS'S UNION DECLINES RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE NEW PROCEDURES.

2. SGAC RESPONDED WITH STATEMENT THAT THE NEW AIR TRAFFIC PLAN FOR PARIS AREA HAD BEEN WORKED OUT AFTER SEVERAL YEARS OF STUDY WITH THE PARTICIPATION OF PILOTS, AIR CARRIERS AND AIR TRAFFIC CONTROLLERS, AND WHILE IT WAS TAILORED TO PARIS NEEDS IT DREW ON SYSTEMS DEVELOPED FOR OTHER MAJOR HIGH DENSITY TRAFFIC ZONES ELSEWHERE IN THE WORLD. THE PLAN (PHASE IIIR) HAD ALSO BEEN SIMULATED FOR THE BENEFIT OF USERS AND TO FAMILIARIZE CONTROLLERS WITH THE NEW PROCEDURES.

3. FAA PIERRE CONTACTED GIRAUD, DEPUTY DIRECTOR AIR NAVIGATION AT SGAC, WHO CONFIRMED THE STEPS TAKEN BY THE FRENCH ADMINISTRATION TO DEVELOP THE NEW PLAN: HE ADDED THAT DURING THE INITIAL BREAKING IN PERIOD, THERE MIGHT BE SOME DELAYS TO AIRCRAFT WHILE CONTROLLERS AND PILOTS FAMILIARIZED THEMSELVES WITH THE NEW SYSTEM. IN GIRAUD'S OPINION, THE UNIONS' STATEMENTS SHOULD BE DISREGARDED AND HE THOUGHT THERE WAS NO STRIKE THREAT.

4. GIRARD OF TWA, AN ACTIVE PARTICIPANT FOR PAST 3 YEARS IN WORKING GROUP DEVELOPMENT OF THE TCA PROCEDURES FURTHER CONFIRMED TO FAA REP THAT THE PLAN HAD BEEN FULLY COORDINATED WITH ALL USERS AND WAS SATISFACTORY. IN HIS OPINION, THE PROBLEM WITH THE UNIONS STEMS FROM THE FACT THAT THE COMMON IFR AT CDG IS MANNED BY BOTH CIVIL AND MILITARY CONTROLLERS, SINCE THE TCA ALSO INCORPORATES THE MILITARY BASE OF CREIL SOME 10 MILES NORTH OF CDG. UNION OF THE CIVIL CONTROLLERS HAVE ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS EXPRESSED THEIR OBJECTIONS TO MIXING MILITARY AND CIVILIAN CONTROLLERS, ON THE GROUNDS THAT MILITARY CONTROLLERS DO NOT RECEIVE AS EXTENSIVE TRAINING AS CIVIL CONTROLLERS. AND THE UNIONS, WHO STILL HAVE OUTSTANDING DEMANDS NOT MET SINCE THEIR STRIKE LAST SPRING, ARE STILL RESENTFUL THAT DURING THE STRIKE THE GOF BROUGHT IN MILITARY CONTROLLERS TO HANDLE CIVIL AIR TRAFFIC. GIRARD SAID MILITARY CONTROLLERS RECEIVE SAME TRAINING AND AT SAME CENTER AS DO CIVIL CONTROLLERS. AS FOR CDG, RADAR, HE SAID UNCLASSIFIED

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IT HAS A RANGE OF 80 KMS AND HAS ALREADY BEEN IN OPERATION 4 MONTHS.

5. GIRARD EXPRESSED CONCERN OVER UNIONS' STATEMENT THAT WERE GETTING MORE PUBLICITY THAN WARRANTED FOLLOWING TURKISH AIRLINES CRASH AND THIS COULD HAVE DETRIMENTAL EFFECTS ON TWA BUSINESS AT CDG. SPATER, TWA DIRECTOR FOR FRANCE, HAS VOICED SIMILAR CONCERN TO RCAA RE THIS LATEST BAD PUBLICITY AND WAS ESPECIALLY

CRITICAL OF UNIONS' OWN ENDS.

6. FAA REP WILL CONTINUE MONITOR SITUATION CLOSELY AND REPORT
ANY FURTHER DEVELOPMENTS.STONE

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